

News Release

Release No. 41-08 Public Affairs Office: 314-331-8068 / 8000 / 8002 / 8095

For Release: **IMMEDIATE** – June 24, 2008

1222 Spruce Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63103-2833 / www.mvs.usace.army.mil/floodfight

Elm Point Levee is overtopped

St. Louis, Mo. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Emergency Operations Center was informed that the Elm Point Levee was overtopped by the Mississippi River at about 1:20 a.m. Tuesday morning, June 24. This is the twelfth levee in the St. Louis District that has been overtopped.

The levee that has been overtopped has since been reported to have breached after the first event, which might be expected in view of the level and duration it performed to before being overtopped.

Based on on-scene information from Corps flood fighters and local authorities, flooding appears to be limited to the soccer park and a sod farm, with no imminent flooding at a nearby mobile home park. But measures are being taken by authorities to alert residents to be watchful and prepared.

The Missouri Department of Transportation also reported that there appeared to be no threat from the flooding to the nearby Interstate Highway 370.

Elsewhere in the flood impacted region above the Missouri River in Missouri, a slide has been reported by a Corps flood fight team in the Pin Oak Levee about one mile east of Winfield.

Slides occur when saturated soil on levee slopes are weakened and slump down the levee. While this will require repair work to restore the strength of the levee prior to the slide, there were no indications of further problems reported last night. The slide started about four feet below the crown (top) and extended to the toe (bottom on the inside of the levee in this case), for a distance reported as 123 feet.

National Guard personnel are watching the site to monitor it for seepage or any other indication of worsening of the situation.

Since there were no indications of progressive problems, flood fighters waited until first light this morning to stabilize the levee at this location by applying heavy sheet plastic and sand bags. They will continue to monitor the location.

No additional problems have been reported over night.

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Note to Editors: The over topping at Elm Point is being erroneously reported as a breaching. It is not. Overtopping occurs when the water level rises until it is higher than the levee. Breaching is a structural failure of the levee prior to it being over topped – before water has risen enough to flow over the top. This is an important distinction from the viewpoint of accuracy. Over topping occurs after a levee has performed to and above its design capability. Breaching occurs before that elevation has been fended off.

Informational Sites

Updated information about the Mississippi River is available on the web by visiting the Corps' website at www.rivergages.com. This web site includes links to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and National Weather Service websites that track Mississippi River flow and projected rainfall amounts.

St. Louis District Flood Fight Page:

<http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/floodfight/>

Rock Island District Flood Fight Information:

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/MidwestFlooding2008/Home.htm>

Graphic of Lock Locations:

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/9FootStaircase.gif>

Graphic of Mississippi River 9-foot Staircase:

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/LockLocationMap.pdf>

U.S. Coast Guard

<http://www.uscgstormwatch.com>

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